

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7036

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1256

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SOCI, BU

SUBJECT: RUMORS OF DIFFICULTY IN WRITERS UNION

1. A YOUNG BULGARIAN INTELLECTUAL HAS REPORTED TO EMBOFF THAT THERE IS A SHARP IDEOLOGICAL CRACKDOWN BY BCP IN WAKE OF LAST WEEK'S FAILURE TO OBTAIN A PETITION FROM BULGARIAN WRITERS UNION CONDEMNING SAKHAROV AND SOLZHENITXYN. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, FIVE WRITERS REFUSED TO SIGN PETITION AND ALTHOUGH NO NAMES WERE GIVEN, SOURCE SAID THEY WERE OF SUFFICIENT STATURE THAT ABSENCE OF THEIR NAMES NEGATED WHOLE PROJECT. AS RESULT BCP IS "FURIOUS" AT INTELLECTUALS AND HAS VOWED TO MAKE THEM TOE THE LINE.

2. COMMENT: GIVEN HISTORY OF BEHAVIOUR OF BULGARIAN INTELLECTUALS IN GENERAL, AND WRITERS IN PARTICULAR, IN RECENT YEARS THE REPORT COULD SEEM DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE. THERE IS, HOWEVER, HISTORY OF DIFFICULTY OVER SOLZHENITSYN MATTER. FOUR WRITERS WERE EXPELLED FROM PARTY AND UNION IN 1971 FOR REFUSING TO CONDEMN AWARD OF NOBEL PRIZE AND "SOLZHENITSYN AFFAIR" IS STILL SUBJECT OF BITTER FEELINGS AMONG WRITERS. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN PUBLIC CAMPAIGN AGAINST SOVIET DISSIDENTS, INCLUDING LETTERS FROM PROMINENT BULGARIAN INTELLECTUALS, THERE HAS BEEN NO STATEMENT FROM WRITERS UNION TO DATE.

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3. WHILE ONE MIGHT EXPECT SUCH RETICENCE FROM OTHER

EAST EUROPEAN ALLIES, SOVIET-BULGARIAN RELATIONSHIP
IS BASED ON TACIT UNDERSTANDING THAT SUCH THINGS DO NOT
HAPPEN HERE. PRICE OF "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" IS
PRESUMABLY UNERRING LOYALTY TO SOVIET CAUSE IN ALL
PHASES BULGARIAN LIFE, A FACT STRONGLY UNDERLINED BY
BOTH BREZHNEV AND ZHIVKOV THIS WEEK. IF WRITERS --
AND OTHERS -- ARE SHOWING SOME SIGNS OF REBELLION, WE
CAN ASSUME THAT PARTY AND SECURITY APPARATUS WILL CRACK
DOWN HARD AND FAST.
BATJER

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